



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
Louisville District

News Release

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U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reminds visitors to practice water safety

LOUISVILLE, Ky. —Memorial Day weekend typically serves as the unofficial start of the summer recreation season. National Safe Boating Week, May 17-23, is an annual nationwide event that precedes Memorial Day weekend and is dedicated to raising awareness of boating safety. The campaign's theme, "Wear It!" is designed to emphasize the importance of each boater and non-swimmers wearing a life jacket.

According to U.S. Coast Guard 2006 statistics, water-related deaths are up for the second consecutive year, 710 deaths in 2006 compared with 697 in 2005. Overall, two-thirds of all fatal boating accident victims drowned. Of those who drowned, 90 percent were not wearing their life jacket. Wearing a life jacket is the single most important thing recreational boaters can do to increase their chances of surviving an accident on the water.

Each year many lives are lost or injured and millions of dollars in property damage occurs as the result of preventable recreational boating accidents on the Nation's waterways. Review safety tips, news, and local laws and regulations before you go - YOU can make a difference.

Below are safety tips from the Army Corps of Engineers to help recreation seekers stay safe in the water over the Memorial Day holiday weekend and into the summer.

Alcohol and water don't mix

Alcohol use is the leading contributing factor in nearly 20 percent of all boating accidents. Just one beer can impair balance, vision, judgment, and reaction time. Research shows that four hours of boating produces fatigue that simulates drunkenness. Boating fatigue combined with alcohol consumption intensifies the effects of both and increases accident risks.

Boaters

Boaters should take appropriate safety classes, be familiar with governing state laws and have proper safety equipment onboard before boating. Seventy percent of reported fatalities occurred on boats where the operator had not received boating safety instruction, according to USCG statistics.

Within the Ohio River area it is important for boaters to know Kentucky and Indiana state laws. Many states require boater education or boat operator licenses. As an added incentive, most insurance companies offer discounts to boaters who have successfully completed a boating safety course.

Wear a life jacket – don't just carry one on board. Make sure it is U.S. Coast Guard approved and appropriately sized.

Don't overload the boat (consider boat size, the number of passengers, and extra equipment before loading). Check your boat for all required safety equipment. Carry a set of navigational charts. Check the weather forecast. File a float plan with family or friends who are not on the vessel.

Swimming and Knowing Your Limits

At Army Corps of Engineers sites, swimming in non-designated areas is the highest (47 percent) cause for all water-related fatalities nationwide. Of all swimming-related fatalities, 87 percent of those were in non-designated swimming areas. Don't take chances by over-estimating your swimming skills, and swim only in designated areas.

Never dive into lakes and rivers. Never rely on toys such as inner tubes and water wings to stay afloat. Reach or throw a flotation device to help someone in trouble. Don't go in the water! Never swim alone.

Water Safety, Everyone's Responsibility

Water safety must be a top priority for everyone using the nation's waterways and lakes this summer. An estimated 360 million people visit U.S. Army Corps of Engineers recreation areas annually. Corps statistics show that most drownings occur during peak visitation, on weekends during the months of April through September. Fifty percent of all incidents occur between June and July when the projects are the busiest and water temperatures are warmest.

Please make your visit to any recreation area a safe and enjoyable one. Taking water safety precautions saves lives – maybe your own.

For additional information about Corps projects, visit <http://www.corpslakes.us>. Reservations for camping may be made at 1-877-444-6777, or on the internet at: www.recreation.gov.

Louisville District Lakes:

Indiana:	
Brookville Lake	(765)-647-6701
Cagles Mill Lake	(765) 795-4439
Cecil M. Harden Lake	(765)-344-1570
J. Edward Roush Lake	(260)356-8648
Mississinewa Lake	(765) 473 -5946
Monroe Lake	(812) 824-9136
Patoka Lake	(812) 678-3761
Salamonie Lake	(260)782-2358
Kentucky:	
Barren River Lake	(270) 646-2055
Buckhorn Lake	(606)-398-7251
Carr Creek Lake	(606)-642-3308
Cave Run Lake	(606) 784-9709
Green River Lake	(270) 465-4463
Nolin River Lake	(270) 286-4511
Rough River Lake	(270) 257-2061
Taylorsville Lake	(502) 477-8882
Ohio:	
Caesar Creek Lake	(513) 897-1050
C.J. Brown Dam and Reservoir	(937) 325-2411
West Fork Lake	(513) 851-0611
William H. Harsha Lake	(513)-797-6081

The Louisville District controls 20 lakes in Indiana, Kentucky, and Ohio each with many different recreational opportunities. The district hosts more than 20 million visitors per year. According to visitation reports, 62% of those visitors engage in water based activities such as swimming, boating, or fishing.

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*For more tips on water safety, visit the Corps' water safety web site:
<http://watersafety.usace.army.mil/>*

*View the Coast Guard federal regulations governing boating at:
<http://www.uscgboating.org/>*